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STARRING IN
ACTION
COMICS
REBIRTH
582
75¢
CAN. 95¢
U.K. 40p
AUG. 86
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
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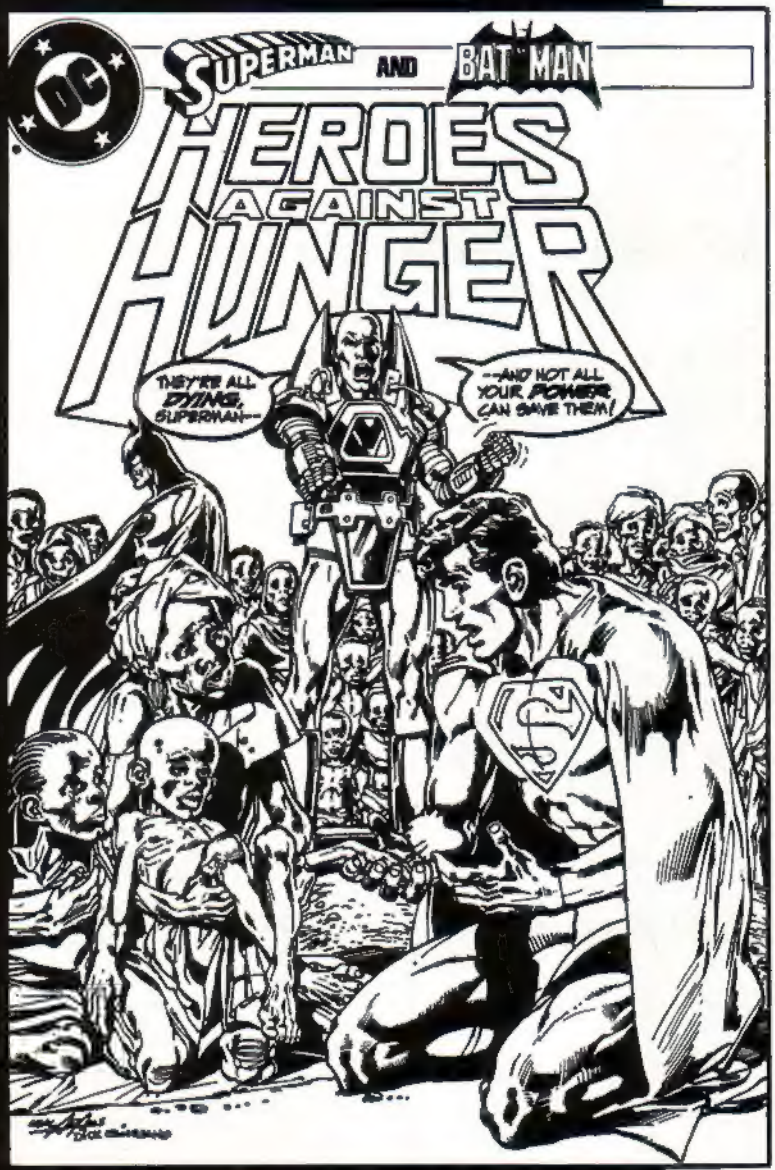
Bob Geldolf proved an individual's efforts to end hunger in Ethiopia could make a difference.

We agree.



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All profits from the sale of this book will be donated to famine relief in Ethiopia.

SUPERMAN
Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER
S-4161
QUICKLY, LARA, QUICKLY! OUR TIME IS SHORT--
--AND THERE IS MUCH YET TO DO!
OF COURSE--JOR-EL!

CRAIG BOLDMAN WRITER | ALEX SAVIUK PENCILLER | K.SCHAFFENBERGER INKER | GASPAR LETTERS | GENE D'ANGELO COLORIST | JULIUS SCHWARTZ EDITOR

"THE STRANGE REBIRTH OF JOR-EL AND LARA!"

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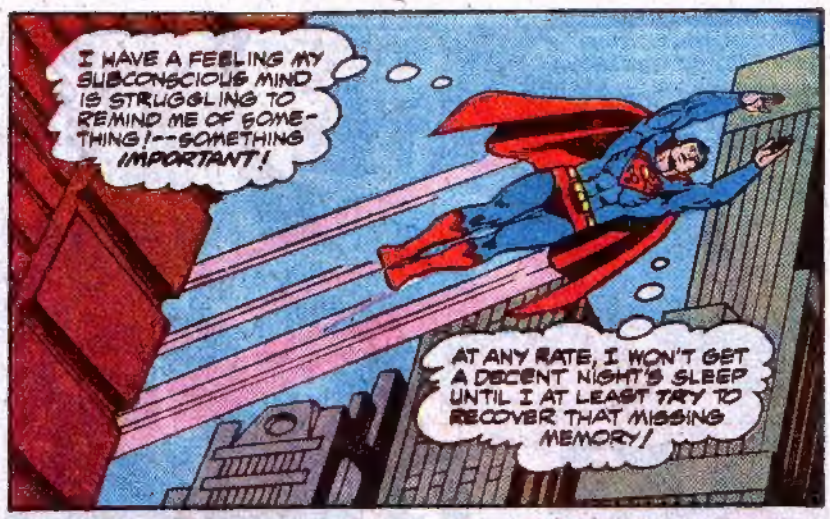
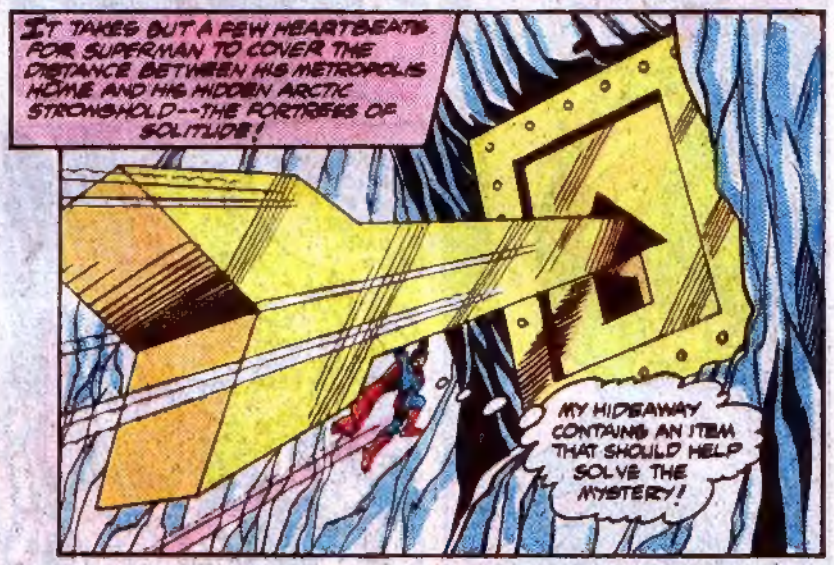
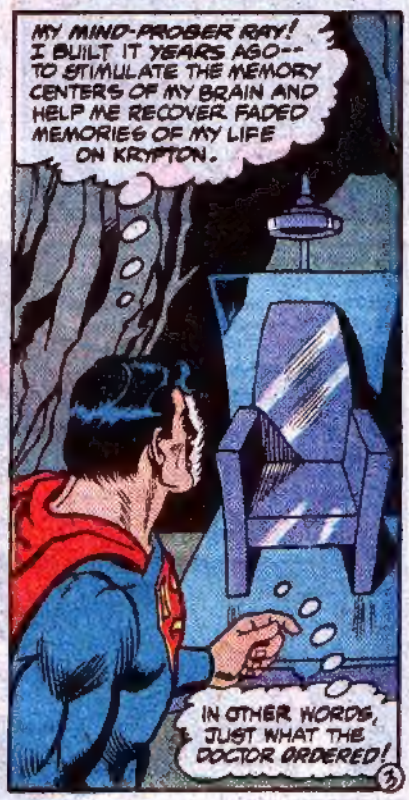
RAO, GRANT ME THE TIME I NEED TO PREPARE THE ROCKET FOR ITS LONG JOURNEY!
KAL-EL WILL SURVIVE THE CATACLYSM AND RISE ABOVE IT, LARA!
AND WE SHALL LIVE ON--THROUGH OUR SON!
GROAN!
THAT DREAM AGAIN! I'VE HAD IT EVERY NIGHT FOR A WEEK! VISIONS OF THE DESTRUCTION OF MY NATIVE PLANET, KRYPTON!
2

CONFRONTING THAT HORRIBLE SCENE NIGHT AFTER NIGHT IS A TRIAL--BUT WHAT REALLY DISTURBS ME ABOUT THESE DREAMS--
--IS THAT BRIEF GAP IN MY MEMORY OF THE EVENTS--OCCURRING JUST BEFORE MY INFANT FORM IS ROCKETED TO EARTH!


I HAVE A FEELING MY SUBCONSCIOUS MIND IS STRUGGLING TO REMIND ME OF SOMETHING!--SOMETHING IMPORTANT!
AT ANY RATE, I WON'T GET A DECENT NIGHT'S SLEEP UNTIL I AT LEAST TRY TO RECOVER THAT MISSING MEMORY!


IT TAKES BUT A FEW HEARTBEATS FOR SUPERMAN TO COVER THE DISTANCE BETWEEN HIS METROPOLIS HOME AND HIS HIDDEN ARCTIC STRONGHOLD--THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE!
MY HIDEAWAY CONTAINS AN ITEM THAT SHOULD HELP SOLVE THE MYSTERY!

GOOD EVENING, SIR! YOUR PRESENCE AT THIS HOUR IS AN UNEXPECTED PLEASURE!
GOOD EVENING, QUIGLEY! ALL'S QUIET, I TRUST?
MOST ASSUREDLY, SIR!


MY MIND-PROBER RAY! I BUILT IT YEARS AGO--TO STIMULATE THE MEMORY CENTERS OF MY BRAIN AND HELP ME RECOVER FADED MEMORIES OF MY LIFE ON KRYPTON.
IN OTHER WORDS, JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED!
3

I'M CONCENTRATING ON THAT TRAGIC DAY...
YES, I CAN SEE IT...
RAO, GRANT ME THE TIME I NEED TO PREPARE THE ROCKET FOR ITS LONG JOURNEY!
"AH! THE STRAY MEMORY!"
KAL-EL'S CHANCES OF SURVIVAL ARE GOOD! AND PERHAPS, LARA--FATE MAY EVEN CHOOSE TO SMILE UPON US!
THIS EXPERIMENTAL DEVICE IS UNTESTED--BUT--
KAL-EL WILL SURVIVE THE CATACLYSM AND RISE ABOVE IT, LARA!
AND WE SHALL LIVE ON--THROUGH OUR SON!
MY FATHER USED A STRANGE DEVICE--MOMENTARILY LINKING HIS BRAIN--AND MY MOTHER'S--WITH MINE!
BUT FOR WHAT REASON? WHAT COULD IT MEAN?
IF THE DEVICE DID ANYTHING SIGNIFICANT, IT SHOULD HAVE LEFT A TRACE OF ITS EFFECTS IN MY BRAIN--EVEN AFTER ALL THESE YEARS!
I'VE GIVEN MYSELF BRAIN-SCANS BEFORE, USING THIS SUPER-DIAGNOSTIC EQUIPMENT--BUT I MUST LOOK DEEPER!
I MUST SOLVE THIS PUZZLE!

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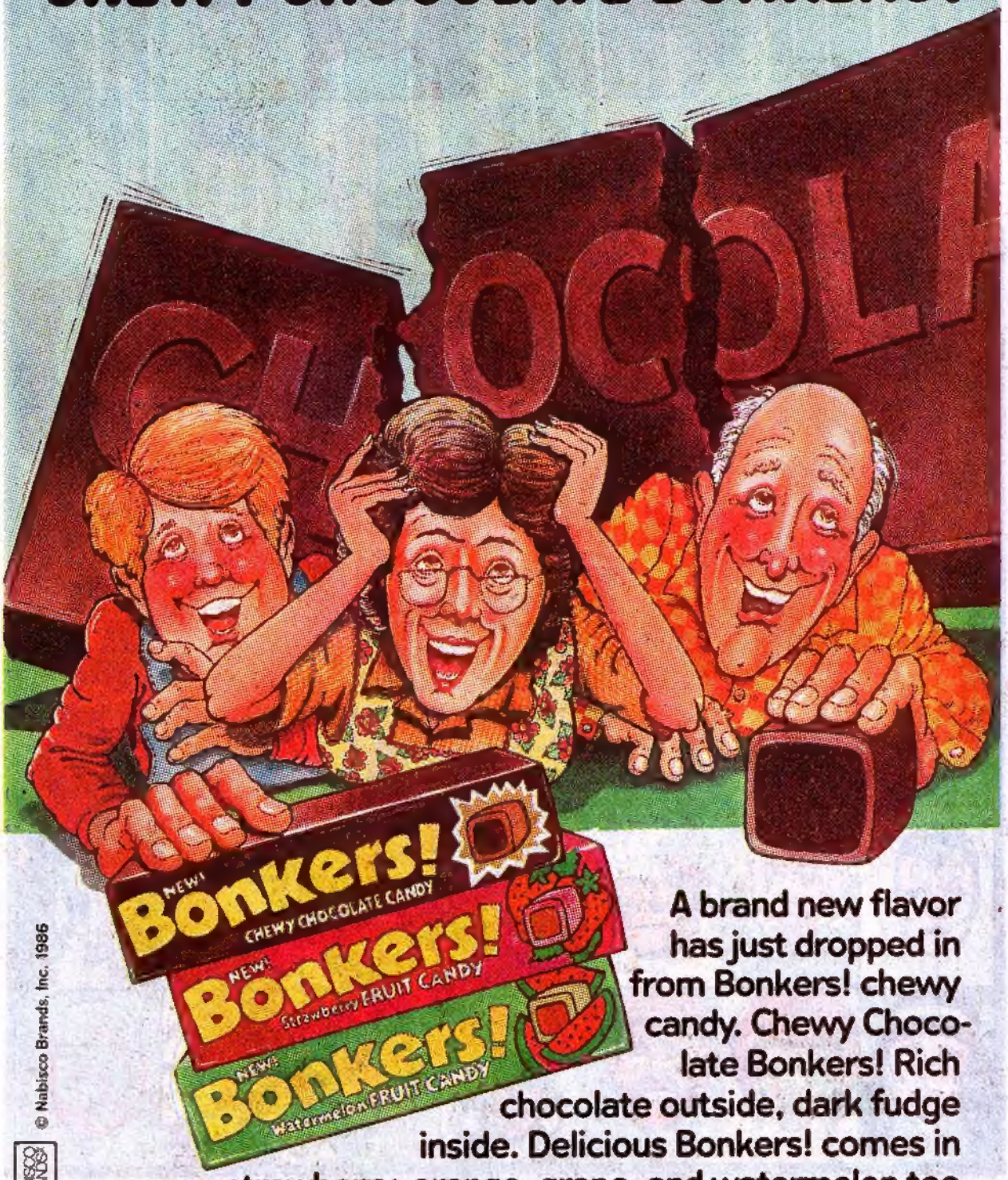

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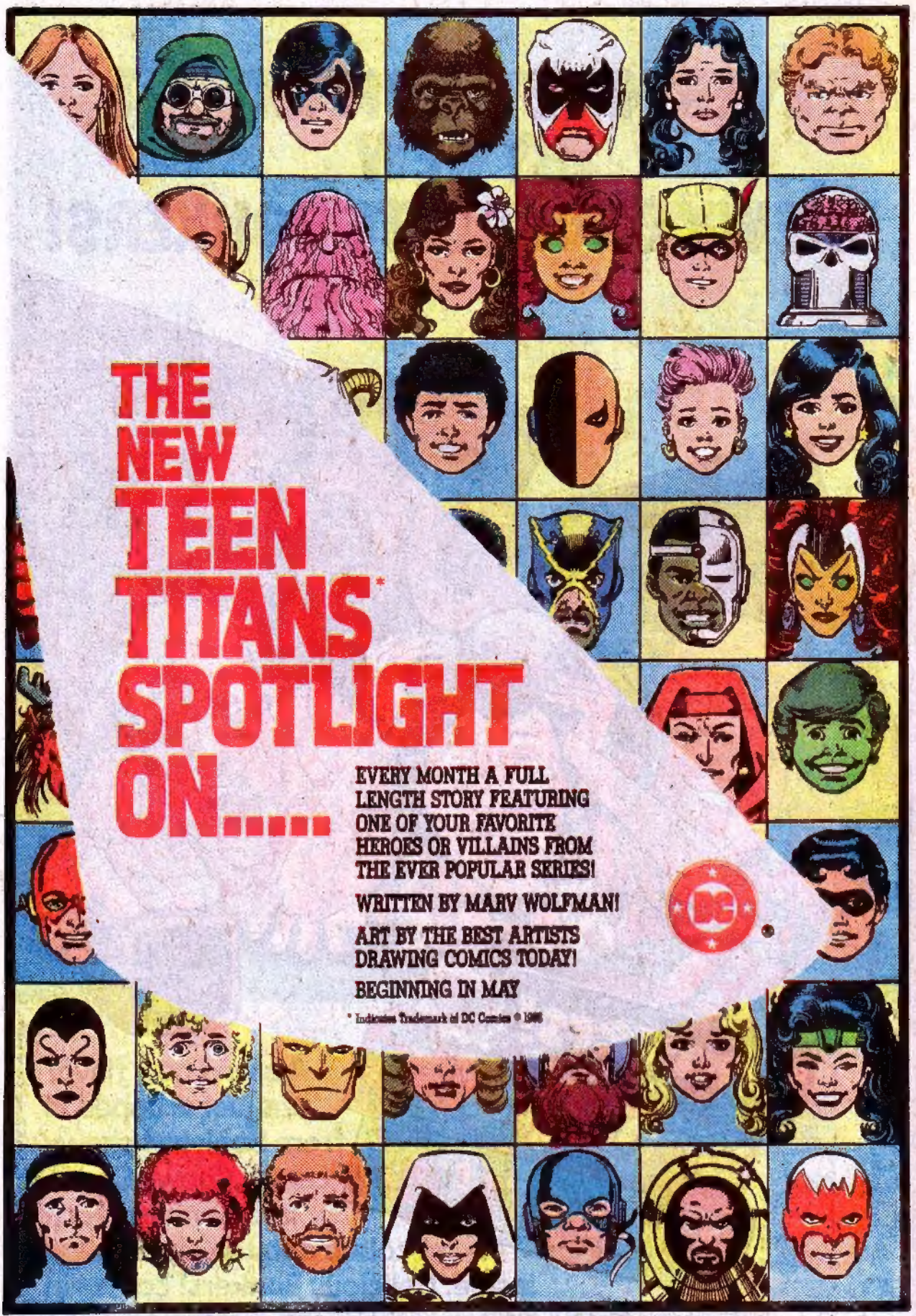
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SOME HOURS LATER...
THIS LATEST SET OF READINGS REVEALS INFORMATION ABOUT MY BRAIN WAVES AT AN AMAZING NEW LEVEL!
I--eh? GREAT KRYPTON!
THE MACHINE RECORDS EVIDENCE OF NOT ONE SET OF BRAIN WAVES WITHIN MY HEAD--
--BUT THREE!
IT'S THE BREAK-THROUGH I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR...
...BECAUSE IF THIS MEANS WHAT IT MIGHT...
...THEN MY KRYPTONIAN PARENTS PROVIDED AN ESCAPE ROUTE FROM MY DOOMED HOME PLANET--NOT ONLY FOR ME...
...BUT THEM-SELVES AS WELL!
THE POSSIBILITY IS STAGGERING! COULD MY BRAIN ACTUALLY BE STORING THE DORMANT ESSENCE OF MY KRYPTONIAN PARENTS?
THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE REASON WHY FATHER USED THAT BRAIN-WAVE TRANSFERENCE DEVICE!
HE PLANTED THEIR THOUGHT-PATTERNS IN MY HEAD FOR SAFEKEEPING... IN THE HOPE THAT ONE DAY, I WOULD FIND THE MEANS TO RESTORE THEM!
5

MY RESPONSIBILITY IS CLEAR! WITH MY POWERS, I CAN CONSULT THE GREATEST MEDICAL MINDS IN THE GALAXY!
AND THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT I INTEND TO DO!
SO THE LAST SON OF KRYPTON BEGINS HIS MOST IMPORTANT QUEST...
...JOURNEYING TO SCORES OF WORLDS--EACH PROVIDING VITAL BITS OF INFORMATION...
YES, IN THEORY, ALL KNOWLEDGE IN THE HUMAN BRAIN CAN BE TRANSFERRED AND HELD IN ABEYANCE AS YOU DESCRIBE.
EACH HUMAN CELL IN YOUR BODY CONTAINS A PERFECT GENETIC "MEMORY" OF YOUR ANCESTORS!
NOW, IN THIS PROCESS I OUTLINE...
...AND OFFERING RAYS OF HOPE!
EVENTUALLY, ON EARTH...
GOOD EVENING, SIR. I TRUST YOUR MISSION WAS SUCCESSFUL?
I'VE LOGGED MORE LIGHT-YEARS THAN I CARE TO CONTEMPLATE. I'VE BANDIED MORE THEORIES ABOUT THAN I IMAGINED EXISTED!
BUT THE REAL WORK STARTS NOW!
FOR A TIME, SUPERMAN LABORS AS A MAN POSSESSED...
THIS RED-SOLAR-POWERED CONTRAPTION IS A HYBRID OF SCIENCES FROM THROUGHOUT THE MILKY WAY--
--BUT IT SHOULD SERVE THE PURPOSE!
6

ASSUMING--AS I AM--THAT MY PARENTS STILL EXIST AT A "CONCEPTUAL" LEVEL... THE PROBLEM IS TO REPLACE THEIR PHYSICAL FORMS, WHICH WERE LOST IN KRYPTON'S EXPLOSION.
VERY GOOD, SIR!
THIS CAN BE DONE BY A PROCESS SIMILAR TO CLONING. THIS DEVICE WILL DRAW THE NECESSARY CELLS AND MATERIALS FROM MY BODY--
--NURTURE AND GROW THEM AT ACCELERATED SPEEDS...
...AND FORM NEW HOST BODIES FOR THE "STOWAWAY" BRAIN PATTERNS HIDDEN IN MY MIND!
MMM! MY MOUTH IS DRY! I FEEL CLAMMY! BETTER GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD...
...BEFORE THE REALIZATION OF WHAT I'M ABOUT TO DO...
KRACKLE!!
UUUHN! THE EXTRACTION PROCESS IS ROUGHER THAN I ANTICIPATED!
...REALLY BEGINS TO SINK IN!
AND AS THE BUTTON IS PRESSED...
7

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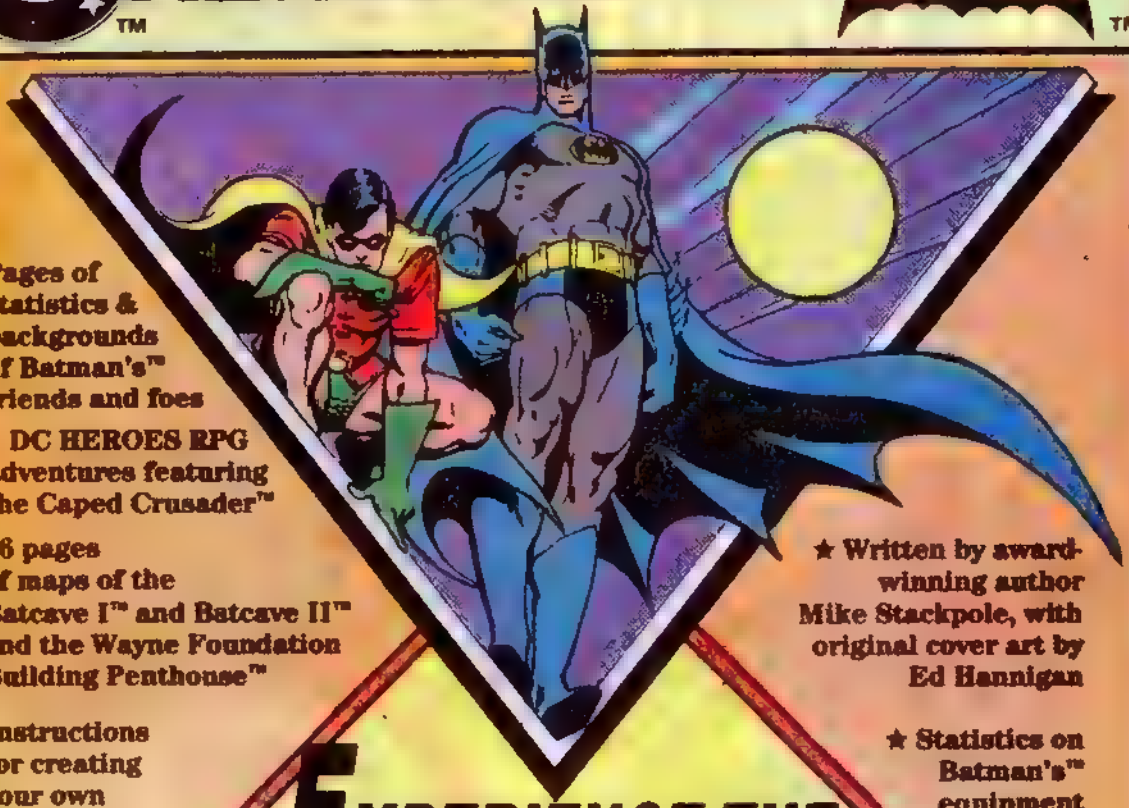

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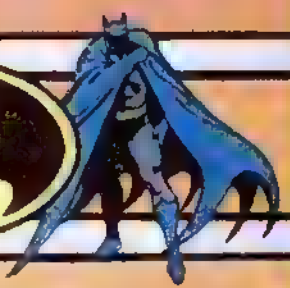

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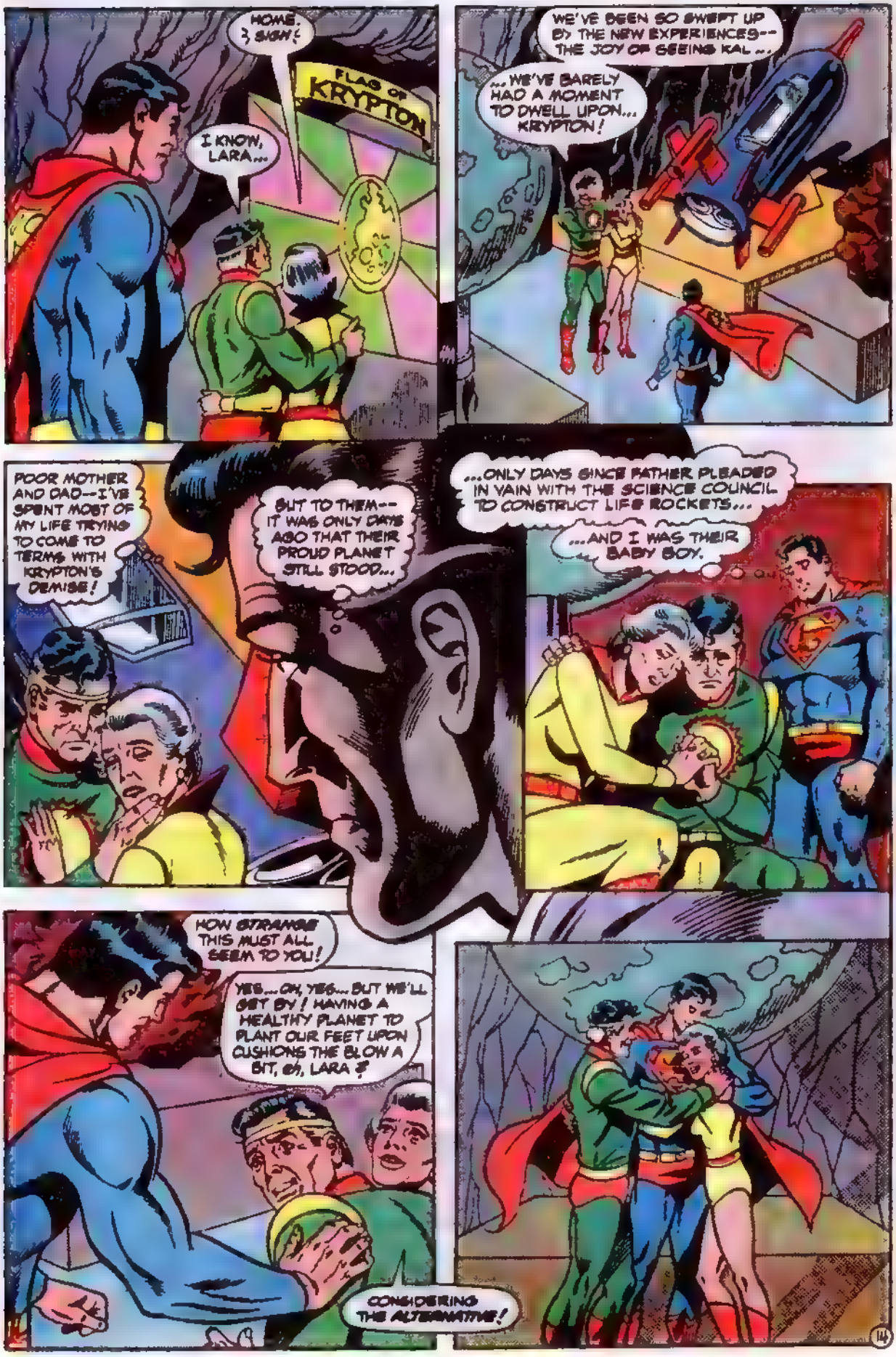
DAYS LATER...
METROPOLIS.
THE GALAXY BUILDING.
DAILY PLANET
CLARK! GLAD TO SEE YOU BACK!
PERRY SAID YOU TOOK A FEW DAYS OFF TO ATTEND TO SOME FAMILY MATTERS!
THAT'S RIGHT, LOIS!
FRIENDS, I'M DELIGHTED TO INTRODUCE YOU TO MY PARENTS!
MY REAL PARENTS--
JORDAN AND LORA ELLSWORTH!
PLEASED TO MEET YOU ALL!
THIS IS A SURPRISE, CLARK! I KNEW YOU WERE ADOPTED--BUT I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE SEARCHING FOR YOUR BIOLOGICAL PARENTS!
I WASN'T, REALLY, JIMMY--BUT I CAME UPON A LEAD, PURELY BY CHANCE, AND--I HAD TO FOLLOW IT UP!
THE INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER IN HIM, NO DOUBT! WE WEREN'T THE EASIEST FOLKS TO TRACK DOWN!
BUT WE'RE SO GLAD HE DID!
WELL, TIME TO LEAVE. I'M GOING TO SHOW THE FOLKS MY STOMPING GROUNDS!
HAH! I NEVER THOUGHT OF CLARK KENT AS HAVING "STOMPING GROUNDS"! BUT HAVE YOU EVER BEEN HIM LOOK SO PLEASED?
CLARK'S A GOOD GUY--HE DESERVES A BREAK ONCE IN A WHILE!
9

"I ONLY HOPE HIS 'NEW' PARENTS ARE ALL HE HOPES THEM TO BE!"
AND THAT, MOTHER AND FATHER, WAS YOUR FIRST TASTE OF LIFE ON EARTH!
IN SPITE OF ALL I WENT THROUGH TO MAKE IT HAPPEN--I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE REALLY HERE!
IT'S A BIT MUCH FOR US TO ACCEPT AS WELL, KAL!*
* KAL-EL IS SUPERMAN'S KRYPTONIAN NAME!--JIMS.
I USED MY MIND-TRANSFER DEVICE AS A LAST-DITCH IMPULSE! I HAD NO GUARANTEE IT WOULD WORK...
OR--IF IT DID--THAT YOU WOULD EVER DISCOVER IT'S EFFECTS AND ACQUIRE THE MEANS TO "RE-CONSTITUTE" US!
IT WAS A GAMBLE, BUT WE HAD NOTHING TO LOSE AND EVERYTHING TO GAIN!
KAL--YOU'VE LIVED UP TO ALL OUR HOPES!
ELSEWHERE, EYES ARE WATCHING FROM AFAR...
DID YOU HEAR? -SHORT-! HE SAID THAT IT WAS A GAMBLE!
SILENCE! OBSERVE!
EARTH IS A LOVELY PLANET, KAL!
AND YOUR YELLOW SUN! IT ENHANCES THE BODY--EXPANDS THE MIND! IT TOOK US ONLY HOURS TO LEARN YOUR LANGUAGE!

AND THAT WAS FAR BELOW YOUR POTENTIAL! I'LL TEACH YOU MORE ABOUT YOUR SUPER-POWERS TODAY! YOU'VE ADAPTED TO FLIGHT...
...BUT YOU'VE ALSO INCREASED STRENGTH AND RESISTANCE TO HARM! FATHER--!
WHY, THIS IS AMAZING!
I CAN SEE THROUGH THE WALLS OF THIS STRUCTURE--TO THE BURIAL CHAMBERS WITHIN!
YOU'VE DISCOVERED YOUR X-RAY VISION--ONE OF YOUR BASIC VISION POWERS!
BRRRR
FASCINATING... ABSOLUTELY FASCINATING!
AAARGHH--!
KRUMPF!

WHAT IN THE NAME OF KRYPTON--?
I ASSURE YOU, FATHER--THAT WAS NOT ONE OF EARTH'S NATURAL WEATHER OCCURRENCES.
IT WAS YOUR KRYPTONIAN WIFE--TRYING TO GET YOUR ATTENTION WITH A BURST OF SUPER-BREATH!
LET'S NOT LET OUR MINDS WANDER, JOR! HERE, KAL IS THE TEACHER AND ME ARE THE STUDENTS!
RIGHT YOU ARE, LARA! SORRY, KAL!
THEY'RE ADJUSTING WELL...
...BUT AM I? WHY CAN'T I SHAKE THIS UNEASY FEELING?!
HUH! MAYBE I'VE BEEN FIGHTING CRIME FOR TOO LONG! I'M ALWAYS LOOKING FOR SOMETHING BAD TO HAPPEN!
YOU'VE SAMPLED YOUR BASIC ABILITIES--
--THOUGH IT'LL BE A WHILE BEFORE YOU MOVE UP TO SUCH ESOTERIC SKILLS AS TIME AND SPACE TRAVEL!
COME ALONG! WE'VE GOT LOTS TO DO!
HE'S LIKE A SMALL BOY IN A CANDY SHOP, JOR!
I FEEL A BIT LIKE THAT MYSELF, LARA! THIS IS ALL SOMEWHAT OVERWHELMING!

AN EMERGENCY ARISES OVER THE PACIFIC COAST...
WE'RE IN DEEP TROUBLE! THE WIND HAS RIPPED OUR BALLOON TO PIECES!
WE'RE DROPPING FAST! I HOPE THE COAST GUARD IS ON THE JOB!
LOOK! IT'S SOMEONE BETTER!
SUPERMAN!
WAITA MINUTE! THAT'S NOT SUPERMAN! IT'S A LADY!
THIS IS NO TIME TO BE SEXIST! JUST THANK YOUR LUCKY STARS!
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE A NATURAL AT THE SUPER-HERO BUSINESS, MOTHER!
AFTER A LIFETIME OF AIDING PEOPLE THROUGH INVENTIONS, THEORIES, AND FORMULAS...
...IT SEEMS A BIT ODD TO TAKE SUCH A HANDS-ON APPROACH TO SAVING LIVES!
BUT NO LESS VALID AN APPROACH, JOR!
I THINK IT WISEST FOR YOU TO KEEP YOUR KRYPTONIAN EXISTENCES HIDDEN--AT LEAST UNTIL YOU DECIDE UPON A DIRECTION FOR YOUR LIVES ON EARTH!
AH! BACK AT OUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME!


HOME, SWEET HOME!
FLAG OF KRYPTON
I KNOW, LARA...
WE'VE BEEN SO SWEPT UP BY THE NEW EXPERIENCES--THE JOY OF SEEING KAL...
...WE'VE BARELY HAD A MOMENT TO DWELL UPON... KRYPTON!
POOR MOTHER AND DAD--I'VE SPENT MOST OF MY LIFE TRYING TO COME TO TERMS WITH KRYPTON'S DEMISE!
BUT TO THEM--IT WAS ONLY DAYS AGO THAT THEIR PROUD PLANET STILL STOOD...
...ONLY DAYS SINCE FATHER PLEADED IN VAIN WITH THE SCIENCE COUNCIL TO CONSTRUCT LIFE ROCKETS...
...AND I WAS THEIR BABY BOY.
HOW STRANGE THIS MUST ALL SEEM TO YOU!
YES...OH, YES...BUT WE'LL GET BY! HAVING A HEALTHY PLANET TO PLANT OUR FEET UPON CUSHIONS THE BLOW A BIT, eh, LARA?
CONSIDERING THE ALTERNATIVE!
14

WHAT IS THIS INSTRUMENT, SON?
IT'S A SIGNAL SCRAMBLER-- IT CAN SHIELD AN ENTIRE PLANET FROM OUTSIDE SURVEILLANCE BY MEANS OF A FORCE-FIELD!
I WONDERED HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE FOR YOUR SCIENTIFIC CURIOSITY TO SURFACE!
YOUR FATHER HAS ALWAYS TURNED TO SCIENTIFIC STUDY AS A DISTRACTION FROM HIS DAILY CONCERNS, KAL!
I UNDERSTAND.
HERE'S SOMETHING YOU'LL FIND INTERESTING, FATHER!
WHY, IT'S MY PHANTOM ZONE PROJECTOR! I INVENTED IT YEARS BEFORE KRYPTON'S DEMISE...
"IT BECAME KRYPTON'S ORDICAL MEANS OF EXECUTION!! CONVICTED FELONS WERE TRANSPORTED INTO A DIMENSION WHERE THEY BECAME ETHEREAL BEINGS -- LIVING GHOSTS!
"FROM THE ZONE, THEY COULD OBSERVE EVENTS IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD, BUT HAVE NO BEARING UPON THEM!"
THE PHANTOM ZONE MAY SURVIVED KRYPTON'S DESTRUCTION! SO DID THE CRIMINALS IMPRISONED WITHIN THE ZONE! YOU CAN SEE THEM IN THIS VIEW SCREEN!
SOMEDAY WE'LL BE FREE, KAL-EL--
--AND THAT DAY WILL BE YOUR LAST! THIS I PROMISE!
HMMM? THAT'S STRANGE...

IS SOMETHING WRONG, SON?
GENERAL ZOD HURLS WARNINGS AT ME--BUT NOT AT JOR-EL? THE MAN WHO DISCOVERED THE PHANTOM ZONE--AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS IMPRISONMENT IN THE FIRST PLACE?
THE ZONERS SHOULD BE FURIOUS TO SEE JOR-EL ALIVE!
I WONDER--IS THEIR LACK OF OUTRAGE A CLUE THAT SOMETHING IS WRONG HERE?
KAL--!
DON'T TOUCH THAT PROJECTOR!
SSSS
WE'VE BEEN WATCHING THIS LITTLE PLAY UNFOLD, KAL-EL! TOO BAD YOU WEREN'T ABLE TO LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES--LIKE US!
I ONLY WISH THAT WE HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE...!
GREAT STARS!
YOU'RE NOT MY PARENTS AT ALL--ARE YOU?
NOW, SUPERMAN--HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?
AFTER ALL--YOU CREATED THE BODIES! WE'RE FLESH OF YOUR FLESH!
AS FOR THOSE EXTRA SETS OF BRAIN WAVES YOU FOUND IN YOUR HEAD--
16

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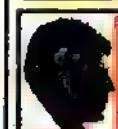

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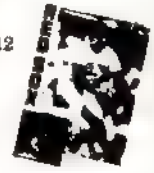

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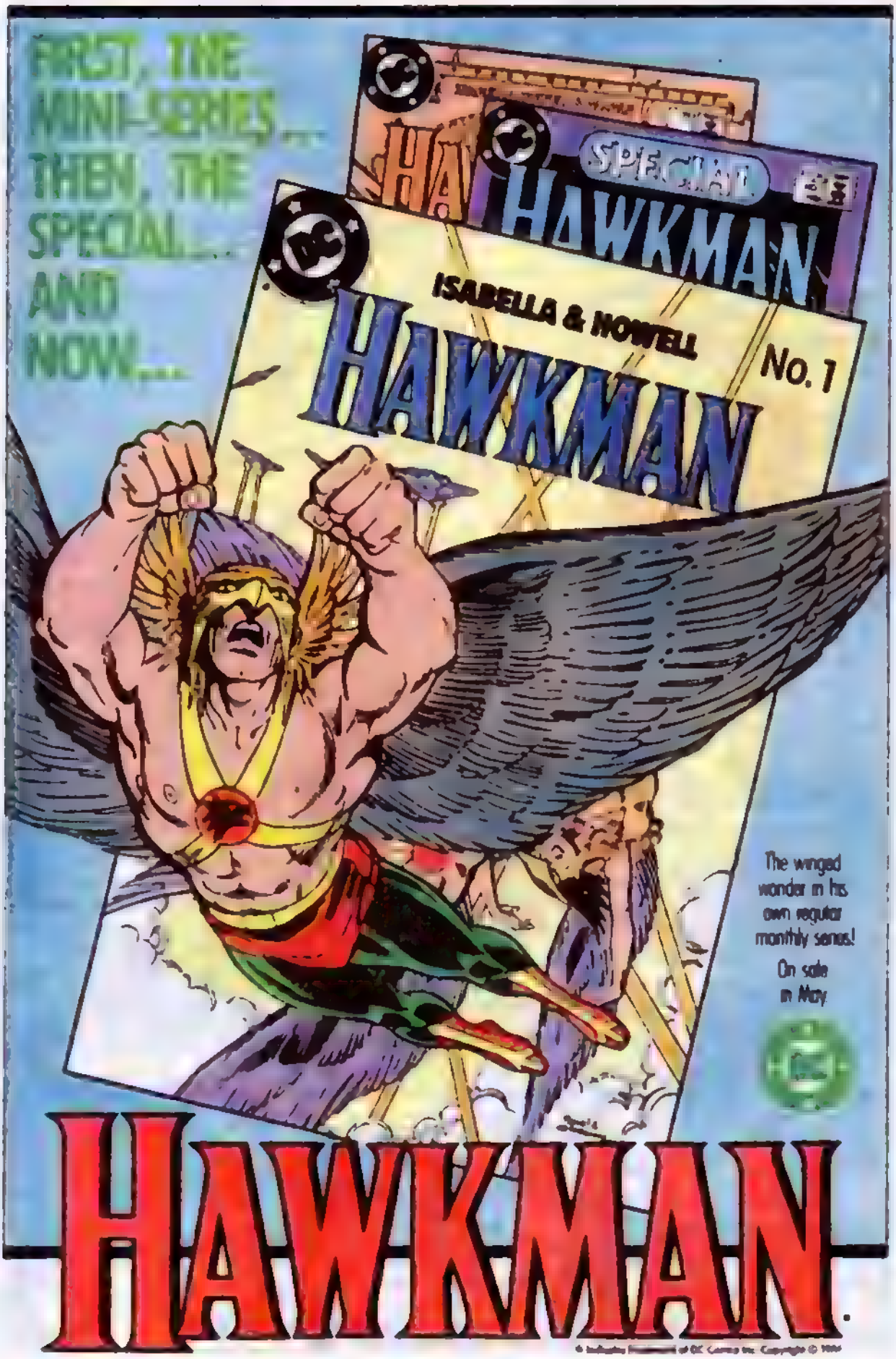
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--LET'S JUST CALL IT A SLIGHT CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY!
BOOM!
SSSSSS
GOOD EVENING, MR. AND MRS. EL!
THE SUPER-POWER TRAINING IS PROGRESSING SMOOTHLY, I TRUST--; SQUEEEE!
KRAK
ANNOYING MACHINE!
SURELY YOU CAN HOLD YOUR OWN AGAINST US, SUPERMAN--
WOK!
--EVEN TWO OF US!
AFTER ALL-- YOU'VE HAD SO MUCH MORE EXPERIENCE WITH SUPER-POWERS!
OR--DO YOU HAVE SOME RESERVATIONS ABOUT FIGHTING AN ENEMY WHO IS WEARING THE FORM OF YOUR BELOVED PARENTS?
WHO--- ARE YOU?
17

WHY--WE'RE A COUPLE OF FRANKENSTEIN MONSTERS!
AND YOU--ARE OUR CREATOR!
BAM
UHHH!
HA! OUR PLAYERS ARE VANQUISHING SUPERMAN! THRASHING HIM SOUNDLY!
HUSH! THE GAME IS FAR FROM OVER!
AWAKENING? THAT'S NICE! YOU LOOKED LIKE YOU'D BE OUT FOR DAYS!
DON'T BOTHER TRYING TO BREAK YOUR BONDS--
--YOU'RE TIED WITH YOUR OWN INDESTRUCTIBLE CAPE!
DO YOU RECALL THE LAST TIME YOU WERE A PASSENGER IN THIS CRAFT, SUPERMAN?
IT'S THE ROCKET THAT ORIGINALLY BROUGHT YOU TO EARTH! IT STILL CONTAINS AN UNUSED RESERVE TANK OF KRYPTONIAN FUEL!
WHEN SUPER-HEATED, THAT FUEL EXHIBITS SOME INTERESTING PROPERTIES; FIRST...IT RELEASES AN ENERGY WHICH IS PARALYZING TO YOUR... OUR KIND!
IN OTHER WORDS... YOU'RE HELPLESS!
HE'S RIGHT! I CAN'T GATHER MY STRENGTH!

BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY-- IT BECOMES VERY VOLATILE-- A REGULAR TIME BOMB!
--SINCE THAT IS GROUND ZERO!
I HOPE OUR MASTERS ARE WATCHING!
UHNN! CAN'T FLEX A MUSCLE!
THE FUEL TANK IS MOMENTS AWAY FROM ERUPTION!
IN SECONDS IT WILL CREATE AN EXPLOSION OF SUPER-MAGNITUDE-- ENGULFING BOTH YOU AND METROPOLIS--
BEYAH--A HEAVY CLOUD COVER OVER THE CITY! IT WILL OBSCURE OUR VIEW!
DON'T WORRY! WE CAN ADJUST THE MONITOR TO PENETRATE!
THE VIEWSCREEN HAS GONE DEAD!
OBVIOUSLY THE ROCKET EXPLODED AND DISRUPTED OUR TRANSMISSION! BUT WE CAN LEAVE NOTHING TO CHANCE! WE MUST SEE WHAT'S HAP-PENED!
SET COURSE FOR EARTH!
14

MOMENTS LATER...
LOCKING INTO EARTH ORBIT!
WE ARE PENETRATING THE VIEWSCREEN INTERFERENCE! THE TRANSMISSION IS CLEARING...
HMM--METROPOLIS HAS BEATEN THE ODDS--AND SURVIVED! BUT WHERE IS SUPERMAN?
SINCE YOU ASKED--!
ATOMIK AND SORBAN FROM THE PLANET VENTURA!
I WONDERED WHO HATED ME ENOUGH TO ENGINEER SUCH A SCHEME!
COME, COME, SUPERMAN! YOU KNOW THAT WITH US, "HATE" DOESN'T ENTER THE PICTURE!
ON YOUR WORLD, GAMBLING IS THE ALL-CONSUMING OBSESSION! EVERYTHING'S A GAME WITH YOU!
EXACTLY! AS YOU'LL RECALL, SORBAN ONCE LOST A BET THAT YOU COULD BE PERSUADED TO BREAK YOUR FAMOUS CODE AGAINST KILLING!*
*AS SHOWN IN SUPERMAN #171--Julie
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

STARTING THIS SUMMER!

-TWICE THE SECRETS-TWICE THE FUN-

It all begins with
SECRET ORIGINS #6
On Sale in June

DC

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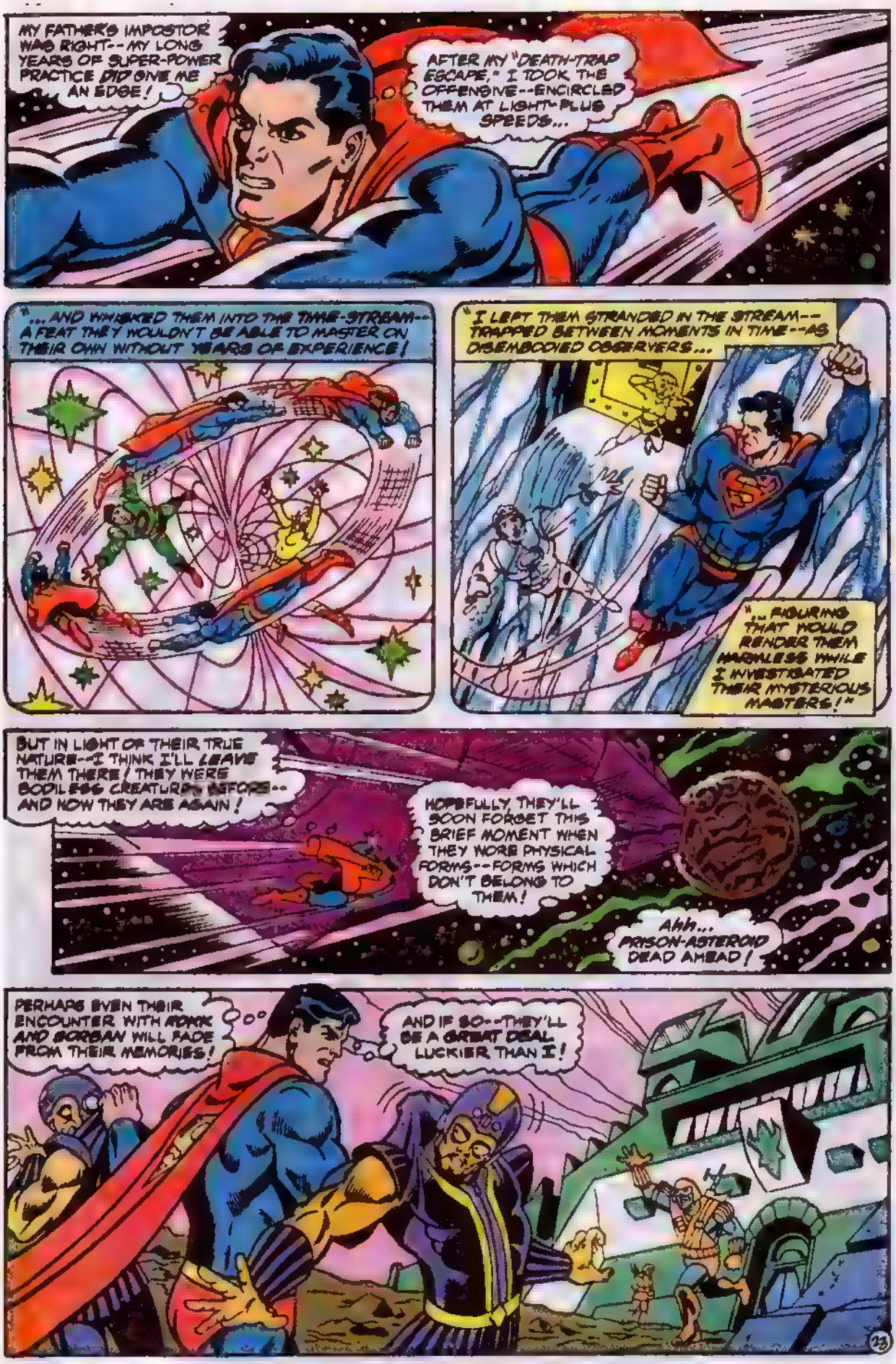
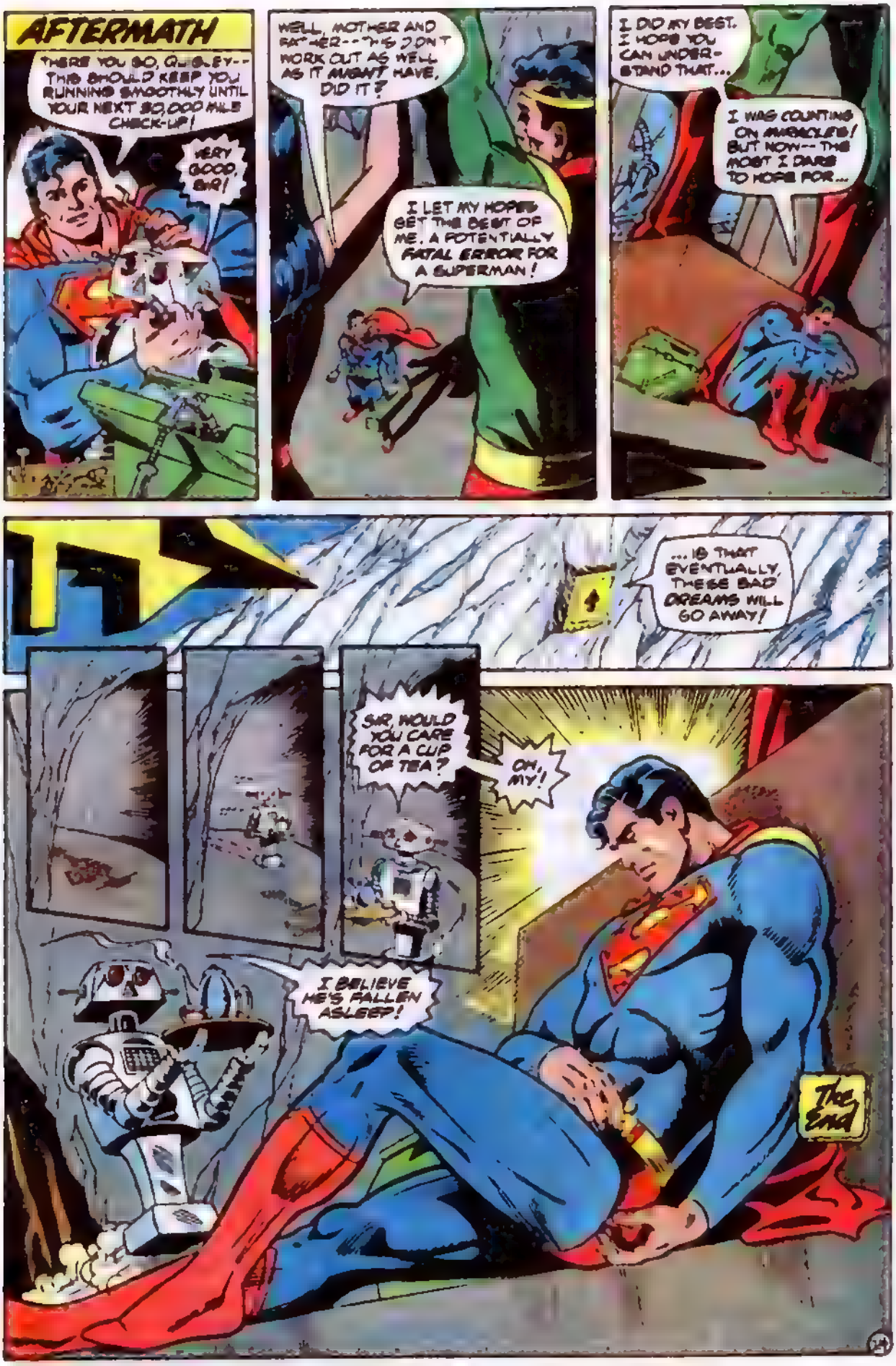
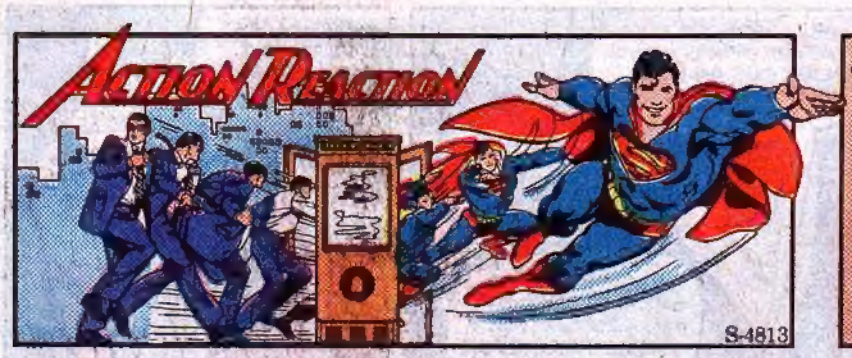
Hmmm! YES! BUT THEN, A SHORT TIME AGO, WE GOT TO DISCUSSING THE "HUMAN CONDITION"--
--SPECIFICALLY, THE ODD PATERNAL FEELINGS THAT LOOM SO LARGELY IN BEINGS OF YOUR TYPE...
AND SO, I SAID "ROKK--I'D WAGER THAT IF WE SET UP A LITTLE SCHEME WITH EVIL BEINGS POSING AS SUPERMAN'S PARENTS--
"--HE WOULD BE DRIVEN TO KILL THE IMPOSTORS--FOR DESECRATING THEIR MEMORY, YOU KNOW!"
BUT THEN I SAID, "NO, NO, SORBAN! HUMANS ARE TOTALLY NEUROTIC ABOUT SUCH THINGS; SUPERMAN WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO LAY A FIST ON ANYONE WHO LOOKED LIKE HIS MOTHER AND FATHER--NO MATTER HOW VILE THEY WERE! SUPERMAN WOULD RATHER THEY DESTROY HIM!"
THE WAGER WAS ON!
HOW DID YOU PULL IT OFF?
"THOSE 'BRAIN-WAVE' IMPOSTORS WERE MERELY FREE-FLOATING INTELLECTS WE SNATCHED FROM A NEIGHBORING DIMENSION! INTERESTING SPECIES! INVISIBLE--BODILESS--
"--AND EASILY PROGRAMMABLE! THEY CAN BE TRAINED TO PERFORM ANY TYPE OF MISCHIEF!
"VIA LONG DISTANCE, WE TAMPERED WITH YOUR MIND-PROBER CHAIR. THAT WAS THE INSTRUMENT WE USED TO IMPLANT OUR LITTLE SPIES IN YOUR HEAD!
"THE CHAIR CONTAINED RECORDS OF YOUR MEMORIES OF KRYPTON--WHICH OUR IMPERSONATORS ABSORBED!"
--AND I USED MY MENTAL POWERS TO GIVE YOU THE BAD DREAMS WHICH SET THINGS OFF! DOES THAT COVER EVERYTHING?
NOT QUITE, SORBAN NOT THE MOST IMPORTANT PART!
21

SUPERMAN--HOW DID YOU ESCAPE YOUR EXPLOSIVE ROCKET RIDE?
YOU'D NEVER GUESS, GORBAN! I DIDN'T HAVE TO ESCAPE! THAT ROCKET WAS A MOCK-UP!
THE ORDINARY EARTH-FUEL EXPLODED--AND SET ME FREE! THEN I WAITED FOR YOU TO COME DOWN AND TAKE A LOOK!
I KNEW WE WERE IN TROUBLE WHEN "LARA" LET SLIP THAT HER "MASTERS" WERE WATCHING! BUT NOW, SUPERMAN--ABOUT YOUR PARENTS' CLONES--DID YOU IN FACT KILL THEM? OR NOT?
WE HAVE A WAGER HINGING UPON YOUR ANSWER!
Bah! HE WON'T ANSWER! HE NEVER WANTS US TO SEE A BET THROUGH!
I'M CONFIDENT THAT SUPERMAN WILL NEVER BE PUSHED TO THE POINT OF COMMITTING MURDER!
YOU'D BEST HOPE THAT I NEVER GET CLOSER TO THAT POINT THEN I AM RIGHT NOW!
I'LL RESIST THAT TEMPTATION--AND PLACE YOU IN SPACE-PRISONS INSTEAD--ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE GALAXY! YOU'VE BROKEN A WHOLE SHOPPING LIST OF INTERPLANETARY LAWS!
GASP!! SEPARATE US?
BUT THAT'S INHUMAN! WE'RE PARTNERS! WITH WHOM WILL WE MAKE WAGERS?
23


MY FATHER'S IMPOSTOR WAS RIGHT--MY LONG YEARS OF SUPER-POWER PRACTICE DID GIVE ME AN EDGE!
AFTER MY "DEATH-TRAP ESCAPE," I TOOK THE OFFENSIVE--ENCIRCLED THEM AT LIGHT-PLUS SPEEDS...
"...AND WHISKED THEM INTO THE TIME-STREAM--A FEAT THEY WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO MASTER ON THEIR OWN WITHOUT YEARS OF EXPERIENCE!
"I LEFT THEM STRANDED IN THE STREAM--TRAPPED BETWEEN MOMENTS IN TIME--AS DISEMBODIED OBSERVERS...
"...FIGURING THAT WOULD RENDER THEM HARMLESS WHILE I INVESTIGATED THEIR MYSTERIOUS MASTERS!"
BUT IN LIGHT OF THEIR TRUE NATURE--I THINK I'LL LEAVE THEM THERE! THEY WERE BODILESS CREATURES BEFORE--AND NOW THEY ARE AGAIN!
HOPEFULLY, THEY'LL SOON FORGET THIS BRIEF MOMENT WHEN THEY WORE PHYSICAL FORMS--FORMS WHICH DON'T BELONG TO THEM!
Ahh... PRISON-ASTEROID DEAD AHEAD!
PERHAPS EVEN THEIR ENCOUNTER WITH ROKK AND BORBAN WILL FADE FROM THEIR MEMORIES!
AND IF SO--THEY'LL BE A GREAT DEAL LUCKIER THAN I!


AFTERMATH
THERE YOU GO, GUSLEY-- THIS SHOULD KEEP YOU RUNNING SMOOTHLY UNTIL YOUR NEXT 30,000 MILE CHECK-UP!
VERY GOOD, SIR!
WELL, MOTHER AND FATHER--THIS DIDN'T WORK OUT AS WELL AS IT MIGHT HAVE, DID IT?
I LET MY HOPES GET THE BEST OF ME. A POTENTIALLY FATAL ERROR FOR A SUPERMAN!
I DID MY BEST. I HOPE YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THAT...
I WAS COUNTING ON MIRACLES! BUT NOW--THIS MOST I DARE TO HOPE FOR...
...IS THAT EVENTUALLY, THESE BAD DREAMS WILL GO AWAY!
SIR, WOULD YOU CARE FOR A CUP OF TEA?
OH, MY!
I BELIEVE HE'S FALLEN ASLEEP!
The End



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Dear Julie:

I feel very fortunate to have gotten the chance to work on the *Superman* books. If I could've picked any assignment in the comics field, I would've chosen to do exactly this. In the short time I've been writing, I have had my words interpreted and elaborated upon by Curt Swan, Kurt Schaffenberger, Wayne Boring, Al Williamson, Bob Oksner, Murphy Anderson—all heroes of mine. It's been just as much a thrill to have some of my stories done by the "younger guys" (Howard Bender and Alex Saviuk), as well as by close friends like Karl Kesel and Ron Randall. It's even been fun trading letters with Nelson Bridwell. And there's even a perverse thrill to be had in being around at the end of an era. Quite a kick all around. Not only have I been able to write stories about a living legend—but I got one as a boss as well.

It's been a pleasure and I certainly hope it won't be long before we're working on something else together. Keep me in mind for whatever else you may have cooking between now and the year 2000. But for my money, you can't beat *Superman*.

CRAIG BOLDMAN
Fairfield, OH

*****

Dear Julie and Bob,

ACTION #578 was a great issue. Craig Boldman's excellent, involving script, combined with the absolutely gorgeous artwork of Kurt Schaffenberger, made "The Most Popular Man in Metropolis" a big winner.

Craig has distinguished himself over the past year as one of the best and most prolific *Superman* writers, with a knack for clever, catchy plots, presented in a fresh and exciting way. He has proven that a comics story doesn't need violence, cruelty, sadism, or pessimism to be good. This story was largely lacking Craig's wry sense of humor, but it did exhibit the smooth pacing, sharp and believable dialogue, and deft intertwining of diverse plot elements (spiced with plenty of action and surprises) that stamped it as a Boldman-crafted tale. There was also the return of that classic *Superman* villain, the *Parasite*, with an ingenious scheme to defeat the Man of Steel. The best thing about this issue was the ways it invited the reader to share *Superman*'s feelings of rejection, frustration, hurt, and anger when his friends and the people of Metropolis turned against him. The closing segment, in which *Superman* revealed that the emotional support given him by his parents enabled him to triumph over the *Parasite*, made for a thoughtful and satisfying conclusion. This was an outstanding story with a lot of heart.

Kurt Schaffenberger's artwork was beautifully done. Thanks for giving us twenty-four pages of exquisite illustrations penciled and inked by the magical Mr. Schaffenberger. I think the art this issue was brilliant, classical work. Some artists fill their pages with more realistic detail or utilize more modernistic storytelling methods, but for sheer pictorial pleasure and visceral visual gratification, Mr. Schaffenberger stands alone.

Applause is also in order for Gene D'Angelo's bright, sunny coloring job and Ed Barreto's fine cover. For my money, *ACTION COMICS* is one of the most consistently entertaining and high quality comic books being produced today. Every issue is a treat. You people are creating some beautiful comics. Thanks for all the good work.

DAVID PULLEYBLANK
Box 103
Denver, IA 50622

*****

Dear Editor:

Yesterday I received *ACTION* #578 and flipped through the pages. I relished the act of seeing how the *Superman* story was progressing.

A few months ago, I wrote that *Superman* was getting strangely unexciting, something that had never happened in my nearly fifteen years of reading your magazines. When a character has been around as long as the Action Ace, I guess he's entitled to a few off-days.

But on to #578. I'm glad the *Parasite* returned. I was wondering where he'd gone. I think Craig Boldman has been taking lessons from Keith Giffen. Both have turned in fine scripts.

I hear there will be a changing of the guard in the near future in the *Superman* magazines. Whatever happens, I must say that you folks at DC have tried to keep the Last Son of Krypton interesting for as long as I've been reading the books.

Good luck. And, Mr. Schwartz, thanks for the fifteen years of fantasy, fun, and adventure. I hope your enjoyment and enthusiasm for these books is passed on to Andy Helfer.

KENNETH D. LANE
6130 Hilton Ln.
Mt. Morris, MI 48458

*****

Dear DC People:

Over the past few months, I've been hearing all sorts of stories about what is in store for the *Superman* titles. I have misgivings about some of these changes, particularly the disregard for continuity, but I've decided to wait till the actual issues come out before criticizing them. I'll base my comments on the comics themselves rather than rumors about their planned contents.

But one rumor I heard prompts me to write in advance. I heard there are plans afoot to renumber *ACTION COMICS*, beginning with "Volume 2, Number 1." Please tell me this isn't so.

DANIEL TOBIAS
4730 Centre Ave., Apt. 212
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

It isn't so. After next issue's Schwartz/Superman swan song (or, considering the penciller, Swan song), this magazine will take a three-month vacation. When it reappears, it will be with #584, continuing that numbering which began way back in June 1938.

And speaking of next issue, which will conclude a two-part story begun in SUPERMAN #423 by Alan Moore, Curt Swan, and George Pérez, this page will be filled with a Nelson Bridwell-penned retrospective on the career of Superman. Nelson, who served as an associate editor on the Superman books from the days of Mort Weisinger (and handled these very pages for many years—including the years when yours truly was on the letter-writing side of the editorial fence), was the perfect choice for such a text feature ... one which, like the story, begins in SUPERMAN and ends in ACTION.

Which means that this issue marks my last letter column in SUPERMAN and ACTION. It's been fun, for Laurie and me, to read and respond to all the letters about my favorite comic book hero. To all of you, I wish health, happiness, and wisdom, and may we all meet again someday. And always remember to "Look, up in the sky!"—Bob Rozakis

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Action Comics 582

August 1986

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